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## Governors Island National Monument *News*

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**Date:** January 16, 2008

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Governors Island National Monument Releases** **Draft General Management Plan**

#### **60 day public review and comment period begins**

**New York, NY** – The National Park Service (NPS) today released the first ever Draft General Management Plan (GMP) and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for Governors Island National Monument (Governors Island). General management plans are required by law of all national parks and serve as long-term plans to guide the management and use of park lands, whether they are natural areas or historic sites such as Governors Island.

The Draft GMP for Governors Island describes the resource conditions and visitor experiences that should exist at the National Monument over the next 15 to 20 years, in addition to an environmental impact statement (EIS), which assesses the potential environmental and socioeconomic impacts of the plan on the monument's resources, visitor experience and surrounding area. The GMP presents NPS' preferred approach to managing Governors Island, as well as three other viable alternatives considered during the planning process.

"The release of our draft management plan comes at an exciting time in the revitalization of NY Harbor. The plan describes a long-term vision for the National Monument, and how Fort Jay and Castle Williams will be enlivened and preserved, in perpetuity, for the benefit of future generations," said Linda Neal, superintendent of Governors Island National Monument. "The enormous potential of Governors Island is more than matched by the dedication of all of our partners, planners and friends, not to mention the general public, who are working with us to turn this vision into a reality."

The Draft GMP is available for public review and comment for a period of 60 days. During the review period, NPS accepts written and oral comments regarding the plan. The document can be reviewed and commented upon by visiting NPS' planning Web site at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov>. Information on other means to view and comment on the document are available on the Governors Island Web site at [www.nps.gov/gois](http://www.nps.gov/gois).

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Additionally, the Park will hold an *Open House* to solicit comments on Wednesday, February 27 from 2:00 to 4:00 pm and 6:00 to 8:00 pm, at Federal Hall National Memorial, 26 Wall Street, New York City.

Following the 60 day public review and comment period, NPS will review all comments and incorporate them, as appropriate, in the final plan and environmental impact statement. After the final GMP/EIS is made available for public review, NPS will prepare and issue a “Record of Decision” and Governors Island will implement the plan, as funding allows.

Governors Island National Monument was established by Presidential Proclamation on February 7, 2003, for the purpose of preserving and protecting the island’s historically significant military fortifications, Castle Williams and Fort Jay. The island, which is currently open during the summer and early fall, provides opportunities for the public to learn about the island’s history, its role in world and national events, and about New York Harbor’s rich history and ecology.

The National Monument occupies 22 acres of the 172-acre Governors Island. The remainder of Governors Island (150 acres) belongs to the Governors Island Preservation and Education Corporation (GIPEC). A partnership of New York City and New York State, GIPEC recently announced design plans for a new park and promenade on the island. While GIPEC and NPS work closely in the operations and redevelopment of Governors Island, management plans for their respective portions of the island are developed and implemented under different legal authorities.

Governors Island’s strategic location, a few hundred yards off the southern tip of Manhattan, influenced its use and role throughout history. The island’s coastal fortifications, Castle Williams and Fort Jay, formed a part of New York’s inner harbor defensive system that included Castle Clinton in Battery Park, Fort Gibson (Ellis Island) and Fort Wood (Liberty Island). Governors Island is perhaps best known for the circular casemated battery that sits on the northern tip of the island. A former prison for Confederate soldiers, Castle Williams is the best preserved prototype of its kind and is one of only three such castles still standing. In 1966, the U.S. Army turned Governors Island over to the U.S. Coast Guard, which ceased operations there in 1997.

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